

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REGARDING HOUSE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS PROVISION TO FUND BLM NEW MEXICO'S PREPARATION OF A NEW CO-DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR OIL AND GAS AND POTASH IN THE SECRETARIAL POTASH AREA OF NEW MEXICO

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, for too long, the number one concern of Americans all across our Nation has been the price and supply of energy. The cost of gasoline at the pump and the cost of natural gas delivered to homes and businesses throughout America have risen to levels that have threatened family pocketbooks and employment for businesses both big and small. Americans are looking for real action that addresses the real problems they are experiencing in the market place—the price and supply of gasoline and natural gas. The answer is to be found, in part, by increasing domestic supply of oil and gas. And we have so much of those resources still untapped—whether in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, in off-shore leases, or on a range of federal properties where the oil and gas resources are already owned by the American people.

Many of these opportunities for increased production of oil and gas on federal lands are admittedly fraught with controversy and caught up in partisan politics. However, the House Interior appropriations bill that we passed on May 18, pursues a supply of 1–2 billion barrels of oil and gas on a federal property that is readily developable, where no environmental impediments exist and where drilling and pipeline infrastructure is so plentiful that the oil and gas can be cost-effectively and quickly delivered into the market.

Particularly, our House Interior Appropriations bill provides an additional \$800,000 to the Bureau of Land Management to develop a new co-development policy to facilitate greater production of both the oil and gas and potash that lies beneath an area known as the Secretarial Potash Area near Carlsbad, New Mexico. There has been some contention between oil and gas producers and the potash industry over how extensive oil and gas production should be in the area. The potash industry has claimed that drilling oil and gas wells variously prohibits recovery of potash deposits by them or creates safety risks to potash miners. The BLM New Mexico State Office has denied many applications for drilling permits (APDs) on the basis of those claims. For their part, the oil and gas leaseholders argue that such claims are baseless and point out that there has never been a safety incident in a potash mine from the oil and gas wells that already exist in the potash area. Additionally, they reference the 500,000 acres that constitute the Secretarial potash area are so vast that in-

creased oil and gas development can be achieved without adversely impacting the potash industry.

Last year, the BLM New Mexico State Director commissioned New Mexico Tech to conduct a thorough geological assessment of the oil and gas potential of the potash area. The State Director briefed congressional staff on the conclusions of the New Mexico Tech study on February 14, 2006. Those conclusions are compelling in terms of the urgent need for more oil and gas in this country. After studying the geologic data in great detail, New Mexico Tech concluded that: “Even considering only the Brushy Canyon and Morrow Formations, a large part of the SPA [Secretarial Potash Area] has significant future oil and gas potential along presently producing trends.” The study further concludes: “The Secretary of Interior’s Potash Area is a prolific oil and gas producing region with significant future reserves. . . . [A]lmost the entire SPA is of interest for future development. . . . These formations . . . consist of extensive sandstones that have demonstrated production characteristics. . . . Horizontal wells have been demonstrated to work with good production, and drilling islands in areas with existing wells are one method of permitting sub-potash development in the future.”

At that same recent briefing for Congressional staff, the BLM New Mexico state director acknowledged that her office has no data to support the claim of safety risks alleged by the potash companies, but expressed a desire to conduct more research on the issue to confidently issue more APDs for oil and gas drilling. The New Mexico State Director also informed congressional staff that she wanted to begin creation of a new co-development resource policy for the Secretarial potash area that would increase oil and gas production while avoiding any legitimate and avoidable adverse impact on current and future potash mining.

The House Interior Appropriations bill provides the BLM Director with additional funding to accomplish the stated objective of creating such a new co-development policy. With BLM already having the full legal authority to create the new co-development policy, BLM can begin action now and does not need to wait even for the enactment of a final Interior Appropriations conference report to commence activity to create the new co-development policy. The only thing now standing in the way of that new policy and oil and gas production is action by the BLM New Mexico office. BLM must understand the seriousness of our intentions underlying this funding provision and the agency must appreciate that we want oil and gas production expedited as a result of this funding and soon. We are watching BLM to see action, and so are the American people.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 921.

No sovereign nation can tolerate having its borders invaded, its people shelled and its soldiers kidnapped. America wouldn't, the members of the EU wouldn't, and Israel shouldn't.

Under the circumstances, Israel's response has been measured. Israel clearly has the right to defend its cities and its people from rocket fire, its borders from terrorist tunnels and its military bases from kidnappers.

Hamas and Hezbollah are terrorist organizations. They have no purpose and no aim other than to destroy Israel. For months they have been waging a war against Israel—and Israel has shown restraint. They have lobbed rockets at Israeli targets—and Israel has shown restraint. They have bombed Israel's cities—and Israel has shown restraint. They have sent their suicide bombers—and Israel has shown restraint. There comes a point when Israel can no longer be restrained. It has a right and an obligation to protect its people from attack.

Ironically, these attacks originate in the areas from which Israel withdrew its troops and settlers. Israel left Lebanon in 2000 and disengaged from Gaza last year. Instead of rewarding and encouraging such movement, Hamas and Hezbollah set about arming themselves with increasingly dangerous and potent weapons. We are now seeing the extent to which these terrorist organizations have been fortifying themselves, and it is terrifying. Their weapons are reaching areas of Israel that have never been subjected to rocket fire before. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis are living in bomb shelters or have been evacuated from their homes.

I am pleased to note that the United States and many members of the international community, including the G–8 have supported Israel's right to defend itself. “We demand first that the Israeli soldiers be returned to Israel healthy, that the attacks on Israel cease, and then naturally for Israel to halt military action,” German Chancellor Angela Merkel told reporters at the G–8 summit.

Many Arab leaders and opinion molders have also condemned Hezbollah and/or Hamas for their actions. Although he issued the usual condemnations of Israel, Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, also chided Hezbollah's “unexpected, inappropriate and irresponsible acts.” I understand that delegates from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and the UAE backed Mr. al-Faisal. In the same vein, the official Saudi Press Agency opined, “A distinction must be made between legitimate resistance and uncalculated adventures undertaken by elements [without] . . . consulting

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